



COPPELL INDEPENDENT
SCHOOL DISTRICT



LEARNING LOCALLY, GROWING GLOBALLY

**A GUIDE TO YOUR
CHILDREN'S SCHOOLS**

A Parent Handbook

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ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

Welcome to the Coppell Independent School District! Parents and schools are partners in the education of children. Both want children to succeed. When parents and families get involved in education, their children do better in school and grow up to be more successful. By understanding how the U.S. school system works, you can help your children succeed and do the best they can.

This handbook will give you important information about the school system in the United States and Texas. If you and your family are new to this country or this state, you probably have questions about the schools. This handbook is general in nature - a DVD has also been created for your reference. You may also contact your child's school for more detailed information.

W Welcome
O Orientation
R Respect
L Learning
D Diversity

TABLE OF CONTENTS

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

I. UNITED STATES SCHOOL SYSTEM	4
1. How are schools organized in Coppell ISD?	4
2. What kinds of schools are there in the United States?	4
II. ENROLLING IN SCHOOL	7
1. How can I enroll my children in school? What papers do I need?	7
2. Which medical forms and examinations do my children need before they can begin school?	8
3. What if my children had these immunizations in our home country or another state?	8
4. What other examinations do my children need?	9
5. Where can we go for a physical examination?	9
III. THE SCHOOL CALENDAR AND THE SCHOOL DAY	10
1. How long are my children in school each day?	10
2. Are there holidays or special days when children are not in school?	10
IV. GETTING TO SCHOOL	12
1. How can my children go to and from school each day?	12
V. SCHOOL PROCEDURES	13
1. What should I do if my child is sick?	13
2. What if my child must take medicine in school?	14
3. Who should I call if I have questions about my child's health?	14
4. How can the school reach me if my child becomes sick at school or has an accident?	14
5. If my child must be late or absent from school, what should I do?	15
6. Can I visit my child's school?	16
7. Do I have to pay for anything in the school?	16
8. Who can I ask about school procedures if I have a question?	16

VI. PEOPLE WHO WORK IN THE SCHOOLS	17
1. Who are the people who work in the school district offices and in the schools?	17
2. Who can I talk with at the school about my child?	18
VII. INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS	20
1. If my children do not speak English well, what can schools do to help?	20
2. What subjects do my children study in elementary school?	21
3. What subjects do my children study in middle school?	21
4. What subjects do my children study in high school?	21
5. If my child has learning difficulties or special needs, what can schools do to help?	22
6. Are there special programs if my child has special talents or abilities?	22
VIII. PARENTS' ROLE IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION AND LEARNING	23
1. How can I learn about my child's school? Is my child a good student?	23
2. How do I know how my children are doing in school?	25
3. How can I help make decisions about the schools?	26
4. What special activities can I attend at my children's school?	26
5. What are some ways I can volunteer at my children's school?	27
6. What can I do at home to help with my children's learning?	27
7. What can I do to help my children plan for their lives after high school?	30
IX. ADULT EDUCATION	31
1. Where can I go to learn English or take other classes?	31
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	32

I. THE UNITED STATES SCHOOL SYSTEM



In Texas, all children from the age of 6 to 18 must go to school. The school year begins in late August and ends in June. There are about three months of summer vacation in June, July and August.

In the United States there are public schools and private schools. Public schools are free and private schools charge a fee called tuition. Some of the money to pay for the public schools comes from property taxes in your community. If you own your home, part of your property taxes helps pay for public schools. If you rent an apartment, the building owner pays the property taxes. The building owner uses part of your rent for these taxes. The government also helps pay for public schools with other money.

1. HOW ARE SCHOOLS ORGANIZED IN MY CITY?

School Districts and School Boards

In the United States, public schools are divided into districts. Some school districts include only one city or town, but other districts include more than one city or town.

Each school district has a school board. The members of the school board live in their school district. The school board makes decisions about the schools in the district. For example, the school board decides if the district needs to build new schools. The school board also chooses a superintendent. The superintendent is the leader of the school district.

2. WHAT KINDS OF SCHOOLS ARE THERE IN THE UNITED STATES?

There are several kinds of schools in the United States: public schools (including charter schools) and private schools. Students may be grouped in several ways - typically by age.

Pre-school (ages 3 or 4): Some children attend private pre-school. At this age, children play with others and learn to listen to the teacher. In pre-school children develop skills that help them do well when they get to kindergarten. Children usually attend a few hours a day for 2, 3 or 5 days per week.

Pre-Kindergarten (age 4-5): If children are 4 years old on or before September 1, they may qualify for Pre-Kindergarten. Please visit www.coppellisd.com/prek to see the criteria and application process for Pre-Kindergarten. Not all Coppel ISD schools offer the Pre-K program.

Kindergarten (age 5): If children are 5 years old on or before September 1, they can go to kindergarten. Children do not have to go to kindergarten, but most children do. They go to kindergarten Monday through Friday. Kindergarten classes are full-day.

Grades 1 - 8 (Elementary): School years in the United States are called “grades”. Children attend school about 7 hours each day from Monday through Friday. Younger children usually stay in one classroom and have one teacher for the whole school year.

Grades 6 - 8 (Middle School): Older students usually have 6 to 8 different classes during the day. They change to different rooms and might have different teachers for each subject. Schools for children in grades 6 through 8 are called Middle Schools.

Grades 9 – 12 (High School): Children usually enter high school at age 14 and graduate at around age 18. High school students change classrooms and have different teachers during the day. High school prepares students for jobs or for studies at a community college or a university.

Before and After School Programs: All Coppel ISD elementary schools offer YMCA after school childcare for a fee. Some schools also have programs for children to enroll in an after-school program for music, sports, homework help, or other activities. Some of these programs are available a fee. You must enroll your children in special programs and give your written permission before your children can come early or stay late after school.

Summer School: Many elementary and high schools offer summer school. Some classes in the summer are for students who need additional help in school. Some classes are for special activities or topics, such as computer classes. There may be a fee for summer school.

After High School: Students who graduate from high school may choose to go to work or join the military. They might also want to continue to study at vocational schools, community colleges, or 4-year colleges or universities.

There are many private and public 4-year colleges and universities in the United States. Private and public universities and colleges can be very expensive. Students can apply for scholarships and loans to help pay for their education. Some young people join the military to get a free education.

Community colleges are 2-year public schools funded by the government. After attending a community college for 2 years, students can receive an Associate degree or transfer to a 4-year university to continue their studies.

II. ENROLLING IN SCHOOL



1. HOW CAN I ENROLL MY CHILDREN IN SCHOOL? WHAT PAPERS DO I NEED?

Needed for enrollment: see www.coppellisd.com for detailed information.

- **Proof of Residency in the Coppell Independent School District:**
 - a) Signed Settlement Statement (signatures required are the purchaser and the Title agent.)
A preliminary statement for estimation of closing costs is not acceptable; or
 - b) Current Signed Rental Agreement (signatures must be provided by both parties). Agreement must show occupancy date.
- **One current utility bill (electric, water, or gas) Bills must contain the resident name and address** – for electronic bills, please print a copy.
- **Student original Certified Birth Certificate** – (campus will make a copy)
- **Social Security Number, only if available** – (campus will make a copy)

- **Photo Identification of parent/legal guardian** (driver's license/passport)
 - a) a custodial parent will need to provide a copy of the divorce decree
 - b) legal guardian must provide court documentation or notarized paperwork.
- **Health Documents:** Current Immunization Records (Texas state law will not allow any students to start without this.
- **Withdrawal papers from previously attended school.**
- **A copy of the most recent report card from previous schools.** For example, parents may have school records from other U.S. schools or from schools in their native countries.
- **A current email address in order** to register a student online.

The school will ask you to complete forms with information about your child and family. The Home Language Survey is completed for all new students. The Home Language Survey asks if someone in your home speaks another language or if your child speaks another language. Schools give an English test to children who come from homes where a language other than English is spoken. Students who are not proficient in English are placed in classes such as bilingual education or English as a Second Language (ESL).

2. WHICH MEDICAL FORMS AND EXAMINATIONS DO MY CHILDREN NEED BEFORE THEY CAN BEGIN SCHOOL?

Immunizations: All students must have immunizations (vaccines) for the following diseases:

- Diphtheria-pertussis-tetanus (DPT)
- Polio
- Measles
- Rubella (German measles)
- Mumps
- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Haemophilus influenza type B
- Meningococcal
- Varicella (Chicken pox)
- Proof of Tdap (DPT booster)

3. WHAT IF MY CHILDREN HAD THESE IMMUNIZATIONS IN OUR HOME COUNTRY OR ANOTHER STATE?

If a child had some of these immunizations in another country or state, parents must provide all immunization records at enrollment. If there is no medical record of the immunizations, the child must have the shots again.

4. WHAT OTHER EXAMINATIONS DO MY CHILDREN NEED?

All new students will receive screenings for vision (eyes) and hearing (ears). If the screening shows a problem with the child's vision or hearing, the school sends a letter to the child's parents. If you receive such a letter from the school, you should then take your child to a doctor or clinic for a complete examination.

5. WHERE CAN WE GO FOR A PHYSICAL EXAMINATION?

Physical examinations are only required for a student to participate in athletics in middle school or high school. The athletic forms and information regarding examination needed can be found at [www.coppellisd.com.athletics](http://www.coppellisd.com/athletics). Children can have physical examinations and immunizations in a doctor's office or at a clinic. All schools have information about free or low-cost examinations and immunizations.

III. THE SCHOOL CALENDAR AND THE SCHOOL DAY



- Labor Day: the 1st Monday in September
- Thanksgiving: the 4th Thursday in November
- New Year's Day: January 1st
- Martin Luther King Day: the 3rd Monday in January
- Presidents' Day: the 3rd Monday in February
- Memorial Day: the 4th Monday in May

Schools are closed for other days too. There are special meetings teachers must attend for their own training or professional learning. Sometimes there is no school on professional learning days, and other times children will be dismissed to go home early. When children are dismissed early, it is called Early Release. The school calendar lists when children stay home for professional learning days, holidays, vacations, or have Early Release. If your child needs to stay home for a religious holiday when school is not closed, call the school to report your child's absence. Send a note with your child when he/she returns to school explaining the absence. Visit www.coppellisd.com/calendar for more information regarding the school calendar.

School Closings: Sometimes schools close when the weather is very bad. For example, if there is a lot of snow outside or there is a tornado, the school may close. Check the CISD website (www.coppellisd.com), watch the television news, or listen to the radio to see if your children's schools are closed.

HELPFUL HINT

Ask for a school calendar when you enroll your child.

1. HOW LONG ARE MY CHILDREN IN SCHOOL EACH DAY?

School begins in Coppell ISD in late August and ends the first or second week in June. The school day is usually about 7 hours long. Students usually eat lunch at school. Children can buy their lunch at all Coppell ISD schools, but some choose to bring their lunch. More information can be found at www.coppellisd.com/childnutrition.

2. ARE THERE HOLIDAYS OR SPECIAL DAYS WHEN CHILDREN ARE NOT IN SCHOOL?

Coppell schools have a two-week winter vacation from late December to the first week of January. All Coppell schools also have a one-week vacation in March. Please check the district calendar or Coppell ISD website for national holidays. Some holidays schools are often closed are:

IV. GETTING TO SCHOOL



1. HOW CAN CHILDREN GO TO AND RETURN FROM SCHOOL EACH DAY?

Children who live close to school usually walk or ride their bike to school. Children who live far from school usually ride a school bus. School busses are low cost or free, if qualified. If your child takes the school bus, you need to know:

- when and where to get a bus pass
- the number of the school bus
- the place your child gets on the bus
- the time your child gets on the bus
- the place your child gets off the bus
- the time your child gets off the bus

For more information regarding bus transportation visit www.coppellisd.com.transportation.

V. SCHOOL PROCEDURES



1. WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD IS SICK?

If children are sick, they should stay home. Do not send a sick child to school. A sick child can make other school children sick. Schools do not want parents to send their child to school if:

- the child has a fever of 100° F or higher
- the child vomited the night before or in the morning before school
- the child is coughing a lot
- the child has a skin rash or sores
- the child has lice (The student will be readmitted to school after initial treatment and a follow-up examination by the school nurse or clinic aide.)
- the child has chicken pox (The child must stay home for 7 days after the chicken pox begins.)
- the child has strep throat (The child can go back to school after taking an antibiotic for 24 – 48 hours.)
- the child has scarlet fever (The child can go back to school after taking an antibiotic for 24 – 48 hours.)
- the child has conjunctivitis (pinkeye)

2. WHAT IF MY CHILD MUST TAKE MEDICINE IN SCHOOL?

Schools usually send a letter to parents if a student in their child's classroom has a contagious illness such as chicken pox, strep throat, scarlet fever, or lice. This letter will tell you what to look for so you will know if your child catches the illness.

Parents should not send medicines to school with children unless it is absolutely necessary. Children are not allowed to take medicine by themselves at school. If it is necessary for a child to take the medication in school, parents should bring the medicine to the nurse's office/clinic and fill out the Student Medication Request form found online or in the clinic. For some types of medicine, schools may need a doctor's note.

Parents should send medicine to school in the original pharmacy bottle, not in a bag or an envelope. The bottle must have a label with:

- the child's name
- the doctor's name
- the name of the medicine
- how much and when to give the medicine

The child must come to the nurse's office/clinic to take the medicine.

3. WHO SHOULD I CALL IF I HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT MY CHILD'S HEALTH?

If you have a question about your child's health at school, call the school nurse or clinic aide. If you are reporting an absence, call the school secretary.

4. HOW CAN THE SCHOOL REACH ME IF MY CHILD BECOMES SICK AT SCHOOL OR HAS AN ACCIDENT?

If your child becomes sick or has an accident at school, the school will call you or the person whose name you provided during enrollment.

It is important to provide:

- the telephone number where you are during the day
- the name and telephone number of a relative or close friend
- the name and telephone number of your child's doctor or clinic
- any special health needs your child has

****If this information changes at any time, you should contact your child's campus to update the information.**

Moving: If you move to another apartment or house, you should contact the school and give them the new address and phone number.

5. IF MY CHILD MUST BE LATE OR ABSENT FROM SCHOOL, WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Late For School: Children should not be late for school. If children come late, the teacher will mark them late or tardy. You should call the school in the morning if your child is going to be late. You must come into the school to check your child in when they are late.

Absent From School: When your child cannot attend school, call the campus every day in the early morning before school starts. Parents can leave a message on the school's voice mail.

When you call the school, to report an absence, you should say the following information:

- your child's name
- your child's grade and teacher
- why your child is going to be absent
- your name and phone number

Sometimes parents take their children out of school during the day before the school day is over. They may have to take their children to the doctor or dentist during the day. If you need to take your children out of school, you must write a note to the teacher. Your child should take the note to the teacher in the morning before they must leave school. The note should say:

- why you are taking your child out of school
- what time you will take your child out of school
- the name of the person picking up your child if that person is not a parent or guardian

When you go to the school to pick up your child, go to the office and ask for your child. The school will ask you to sign a paper so your child can leave.

Family Vacations: Parents should not take their children on vacations during school. Parents should take family vacations during school vacations. If you must take your vacation during school, you should talk to your child's teacher before you go. Students who are gone on vacation for more than 10 days, during school, will be withdrawn from Coppell ISD schools.

Make-up Work: Children who are absent from school must do the school work and homework they miss. If a child is absent from school for more than 2 days, schools want parents to call the school to get the make-up work. You may pick make-up work in the main office.

6. CAN I VISIT MY CHILD'S SCHOOL?

Visiting the School: Parents are welcome to visit their children's school, but schools prefer it to be in a volunteer capacity. When you visit the school, you must first go to the office to sign-in and request a visitor's pass.

If parents want to talk to the teacher, they must make an appointment in advance.

7. DO I HAVE TO PAY FOR ANYTHING IN THE SCHOOL?

There are fees for some school activities or materials:

Extra activities: Sometimes there are fees for activities such as sports, music lessons, band instruments, uniforms, art supplies, or academic and social clubs. Many of these activities are before and after school.

Field Trips: Sometimes students go on field trips to museums, zoos, and other places. Parents must sign a permission form before the child can go on the field trip. Sometimes there is a small fee to help pay for the field trip. Sometimes parents are offered a chance to volunteer to go on the field trip to help the teacher watch the children on the trip.

Lunches: If children do not bring their lunch to school, they can usually buy lunch at school. Most schools have a free or low-cost lunch program for parents that cannot afford to pay. Parents must fill out a form about their family income for their children to receive free or low-cost lunches. Parents may pay online for school lunches in the student's lunch account.

8. WHERE CAN I FIND INFORMATION ABOUT SCHOOL PROCEDURES?

School policies and procedures can be found in the Student Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct. This information is found at www.coppellisd.com/studenthandbook.

VI. PEOPLE WHO WORK IN THE SCHOOLS



School personnel are the people who work in schools. There are three kinds of school personnel: administrators, teachers, and support staff.

Administrators do not teach students. They are in charge of the schools. There are different kinds of administrators:

- **Superintendent:** The superintendent is the administrator of the school district.
- **Principal:** Each school in the district has a principal who is the administrator of the school.
- **Assistant Principal:** Sometimes schools have assistants to help the principals.

Teachers teach the students in the school. There are many different kinds of teachers:

- **Classroom Teacher:** In kindergarten through 5th grade, students usually stay with their classroom teacher during the school day. The classroom teacher usually teaches many subjects such as reading, math, and science.

- **Bilingual Teacher:** The bilingual teacher teaches subjects in the students' native language and in English.
- **English as a Second Language (ESL) Teacher:** The ESL teacher teaches English to students who don't speak much English.
- **Special Education Teacher:** The special education teacher teaches students with disabilities and special needs.
- **Gifted and Talented (GT)Teacher:** The GT teacher teaches classes with more rigorous work.
- **Music Teacher:** The music teacher teaches rhythm, singing and how to play a musical instrument.
- **Art Teacher:** The art teacher teaches painting, drawing, clay modeling, and other arts.
- **Gym Teacher/Physical Education (PE) Teacher:** The gym teacher or P.E. teacher teaches physical education such as sports and exercises.
- **Librarian:** The librarian teaches about the library and how its use can be helpful. He/she helps students borrow books from the library.
- **Speech Teacher:** The speech teacher helps students who have problems with pronunciation and speaking.

Support Staff help the administrators and teachers do their work. Some of the support staff are:

- **School Secretary:** The secretary answers the telephone, types letters and notes, greets school visitors, and helps the principal.
- **School Nurse or Clinic Aide:** The school nurse takes care of sick children in the school.
- **Counselor:** The counselor helps students with problems they are having in school or at home. The counselor may work with the child, the parent or the whole family. In high school, the counselor helps students choose their classes and gives them information about colleges and jobs.

2. WHO CAN I TALK WITH AT THE SCHOOL ABOUT MY CHILD?

In elementary school, talk to your child's classroom teacher first. He or she will help you or tell you who can help you. Email is usually the best method.

In middle or high school, you can contact your child's appropriate teacher.

At the beginning of the school year, fill out the information in this chart about your children:

Child's Name	School's Name	School's Telephone Number	Grade	Teacher's Name

VII. INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS



1. IF MY CHILDREN DO NOT SPEAK ENGLISH WELL, WHAT CAN SCHOOLS DO TO HELP?

Students who have difficulty speaking or reading English may take English as a second language (ESL) or bilingual classes at school. ESL classes teach students to speak, read and write in English.

When students first enroll in school, parents fill out the Home Language Survey to indicate whether a language other than English is spoken in their home. **This is a legal document and parents should fill it out accurately.** Students who come from a home where another language is spoken take an English language screening test. The test helps the school place the students in the right classes. Students who are learning English enroll in ESL programs and take an English test each year, called Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS), to measure growth in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Students usually take ESL classes until they reach the state English proficiency level on the annual test. Parents may tell the school to take their children out of the ESL classes, if they think it is best, but the children will continue to take the annual TELPAS test until they reach the state English proficiency level.

2. WHAT SUBJECTS DO MY CHILDREN STUDY IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL?

The school curriculum is the subjects children study in school. In elementary schools, children study many different subjects:

- reading, language arts, and math (every day)
- health, science, social studies (2 to 5 times a week)
- art, physical education, library, music (1 or 2 times a week)

In elementary school, each class is about 30 or 40 minutes long. Children also have recess in elementary school. During recess, children usually play outside in the school playground. Recess is about 15 minutes.

3. WHAT SUBJECTS DO MY CHILDREN STUDY IN MIDDLE SCHOOL?

In middle school or junior high school, children usually change rooms for classes. They usually have different teachers during the day. They usually stay in the building during the day and do not have recess. The subjects they study are:

- Reading and Language Arts
- Math
- Science
- Social Studies
- Foreign Languages (for example Spanish)
- Music (Band or Choir)
- Physical Education/Athletics
- Computers
- Art

4. WHAT SUBJECTS DO MY CHILDREN STUDY IN HIGH SCHOOL?

High school students take required and elective courses. Required courses are subjects that all students must take to graduate. For example, English and math are required courses.

Some high school classes have different levels of difficulty. For example, an English class might be a basic, regular, advanced or honors class. Here are some of the different subjects in high school:

- English
- Math (for example, algebra or geometry)
- Science (for example, biology or chemistry)
- Computer Science
- Physical Education/Athletics
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math)
- Business
- Social Studies (History, Geography)
- Fine Arts (Art, Theatre, Choir)
- Foreign Languages
- English as a Second Language (ESL)

HELPFUL HINT

Keep a folder for all school documents. Often children bring home school information for parents in their backpacks. Your folder can hold information about the school calendar, bus schedule, school vacations, holidays, lunch menus, and other materials and announcements sent from the school.

5. IF MY CHILD HAS LEARNING DIFFICULTIES OR SPECIAL NEEDS, WHAT CAN THE SCHOOL DO TO HELP?

Special education is a program for students with learning difficulties in school. These students may have problems seeing, hearing, talking, walking, learning, or behaving in class. Schools provide special education services for disabled students to help them succeed in school. You can find out if your child qualifies for special education services at your child's school. If your child has special learning needs:

- Ask your child's counselor about the services available in your child's school.
- Tell the counselor what kind of special help your child needs at school.
- Keep all important documents and letters the school staff gives or sends to you.

6. ARE THERE SPECIAL PROGRAMS IF MY CHILD HAS SPECIAL TALENTS OR ABILITIES?

The Coppell ISD Gifted and Talented (GT) services are designed to provide an academically challenging education for learners who perform or show the potential to perform at a remarkably high level of accomplishment when compared to other learners of the same age, experience, or environment and who:

- Exhibit high performance capability in an intellectual, creative, or artistic area;
- Possesses an unusual capacity for leadership; or
- Excel in a specific academic field (mathematics or language arts)

Visit www.coppellisd.com for more information on Gifted and Talented services.



VII. PARENTS' ROLES IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION AND LEARNING



Schools want parents to be involved in their children's education. Parents can be involved in their children's schools in many ways. They can:

- talk to principals and teachers
- attend school activities
- volunteer at the schools (must fill out a background check first)
- talk to their children about their school day and school work

1. HOW CAN I LEARN ABOUT MY CHILD'S SCHOOL? IS MY CHILD A GOOD STUDENT?

Schools have different ways to tell parents about school programs and their children's learning progress.

Communication takes place primarily through email either from your child’s teachers, campus, or the school district. E-newsletters are regularly sent to parents about calendars, events and activities taking place throughout Coppell ISD. Some items may include:

- School Calendars, classroom activities, holidays, or school programs
- Newsletters telling what has happened in the classrooms and school
- Surveys asking parents for their ideas and concerns
- Announcements for school meetings, conferences, honor assemblies, school closings, and other events
- Teacher websites
- Take Home folders
- Mobile App – attendance, grades, lunch accounts, and more

Sometimes parents need to answer by sending written materials back to the school. (For example, you must sign a permission form before your children can go on a field trip.)

The Internet and phone calls are other ways schools communicate with parents. Teachers most often use email to communicate with parents. The school district and all schools also have websites with information about school programs, classroom activities, and how to email a teacher. Visit www.coppellisd.com for more information.

Curriculum Nights are scheduled within the first few weeks of the school year. Parents can come to the school to meet the teachers and are given information regarding the curriculum or course work a child will learn throughout the year. Teachers discuss homework assignments, assessments, tutoring schedules, and the best time and way to communicate with them.

Parent-Teacher Conferences are meetings between parents and teachers. The teacher meets with each child’s parents to discuss the child’s progress or behavior in the classroom. In elementary school, teachers usually ask for at least one conference during the school year, in the fall. However, if a child is having serious learning or behavior difficulties, a teacher may ask parents to come for a conference at other times during the year. In middle or high school, parents need to schedule the conference, if they feel it is needed. Parents can email or call the teacher to ask for a meeting. Conferences can be either during the teacher’s planning period or held before or after the school day. Parents should be on time for all conferences.

Open House takes place in the spring and is a time for parents to meet their children’s teachers, see their classrooms, and hear about what work their children are doing.

HELPFUL HINT

If you have difficulty talking to someone at the school or reading English, ask someone who speaks English to call the school to explain the problem. Schools may have translators to help parents who speak little or no English. The school won’t know there is an issue unless you tell them.

2. HOW DO I KNOW HOW MY CHILDREN ARE DOING IN SCHOOL?

Report Cards: Report cards tell parents how their children are doing in school. Report cards list each subject children study. For each subject, there is a letter or number grade.

Parents receive their children’s report cards 4-6 times a year. Children usually bring the report cards home. Some schools give report cards to parents at Parent-Teacher Conferences. Other schools send the report cards to parents in the mail. When parents receive the report cards, they need to sign the report card or the envelope. Then their children should return the report card to school.

Grades: Schools use grades to tell parents how their children are doing in each subject.

Kindergarten through third grade (K-3) use Standards Based Reporting to communicate student progress using the following levels:

- Mastered Standards
- Approaching Standards
- Insufficient Progress towards Standards
- N/A Not Assessed

Fourth grade (4) uses both Standards Based Reporting as well as traditional grading percentages.

Fifth through twelfth (5-12) grades use traditional grading (0-100) based on percentages.

A grade of 70 or above is considered a passing grade. A grade below 70 means that the child did not pass the subject. If a student does not pass a subject, they may have to take the subject again or do extra work to earn a passing grade.

Teachers use data to determine grades to give to the children. Teachers look at the children’s school work, homework, and tests to help them decide what grades to give. Teachers also watch and listen to the children in class to determine students’ grades.

Interim Reports: Schools send home interim or progress reports between report cards. In some schools, parents of every student receive an interim report. These interim reports tell parents how their children are doing in each subject. These reports tell parents if their children are having difficulty in certain subjects.

HELPFUL HINT

Parents and students can check grades frequently on the CISD Mobile App. Download it today!

3. HOW CAN I HELP IN MY CHILD'S SCHOOL?

Parents can help school administrators make decisions about school programs. Schools invite parents to attend meetings for different parent groups. Parents can give ideas and advice about programs in their children's schools when they attend these group meetings:

- Parent Advisory Committees are groups of parents who give schools advice and ideas for improving special programs such as Bilingual Education.
- School Improvement Committees/Teams develop plans for how the school personnel, parents, and community can improve student learning.
- Parent-Teacher Organizations (PTO) plan programs to support the school. For example, a parent-teacher organization might plan a book fair to sell books. They may use the money earned to buy supplies for the schools, fund field trips, or pay for guest authors. Parents can also support the school by volunteering time or skills.

4. WHAT SPECIAL ACTIVITIES CAN I ATTEND AT MY CHILDREN'S SCHOOLS?

Schools often invite parents to special school activities. These activities give teachers, parents, and children a time to get to know each other.

Sometimes parents come to school to see their children in activities such as:

- Sports Events to see their children play sports such as soccer, volleyball, or basketball.
- Plays and Musical Presentations to see their children act, sing, or play an instrument.
- Assemblies such as graduations or honor nights to see their children receive honors and awards.

Schools also invite families to school to learn new information. Some of these activities are:

- Curriculum Nights show parents what their children will learn during the school year. The teacher may also explain what students have to learn for promotion to the next grade or to graduate.
- Parent Workshops, such as Parent University 2.0, give parents helpful ideas about raising their children. Parents can learn how to help their children be healthy and successful. For example, a session may be about how to keep children in school and not drop out. Parent University 2.0 can also teach parents how to help their children learn by providing information and resources about the schools' curriculum, safety and digital citizenship.

- School Orientations are meetings for parents and new students. Often orientations are held for parents of kindergarten, eighth grade and high school freshman (9th grade) students. Parents receive information about the school their children will attend. For example, parents may learn about the school's dress code. Parents may also learn how to help their children choose courses.

Sometimes schools have social activities for parents and families in the community such as International Fairs, Grandparents' & Special Friends Day, and School Spirit Day. Families come to the school to have fun and enjoy themselves. For example, they can taste different foods from many countries at an International Fair.

5. WHAT ARE SOME WAYS I CAN VOLUNTEER AT MY CHILDREN'S SCHOOLS?

Sometimes the school needs help with school activities. Schools ask parents to volunteer for different activities. You might also be interested in serving on a school or district committee such as the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), or the Student Health Advisory Council (SHAC). All volunteers need to fill out a background check form before volunteering at the school. Visit www.coppellisd.com/volunteer to apply.

For Classroom and Learning Activities you might volunteer to:

- talk to a class about your job or your native country
- go on a field trip with a class
- read to a class or listen to students read

For School Programs you might volunteer to:

- bring in refreshments for a parents' meeting
- plan a fundraiser
- help with a school dance
- help translate written materials

There are many ways for you to participate in schools. Schools need your help, ideas, and participation in your children's education. You are a very important part of your children's education. You are always welcome in the schools.

6. WHAT CAN I DO AT HOME TO HELP WITH MY CHILDREN'S LEARNING?

Successful students come to school ready to learn and have good study habits. There are many ways parents can help their children do well in school. You can help even if you speak very little English. You do not have to know English to help. Here are important things you can do to help your children's learning:

Dress for the Weather: Make sure your children’s clothes are okay for the weather outside. For example, if it’s cold outside, they should wear warm clothes such as coats, hats, and gloves.

Dress Codes: Dress codes are special rules about the clothing children can wear to school. For example, in some schools boys cannot wear hats inside and girls are not allowed to wear halter tops. If your children are not dressed correctly for school, schools may send them home.

School Supplies: Children need to bring school supplies to class. School supplies are paper, pencils, pens, and erasers. Sometimes children need other supplies such as rulers, scissors, or glue. Usually teachers will give students a list of the school supplies they need or packs can be purchased from the school PTO. If you are not able to buy the supplies, tell the teacher. School supply lists are posted on each campus website at www.coppellisd.com.

Talking about Schoolwork: Parents should ask their children each day, “How was school today?” “Do you have any homework tonight?” Schools want you to discuss schoolwork with your children. You can ask your children about what they are learning in their classes. You can also ask your children to bring home and show you their graded papers.

Helping with Homework: Homework is an assignment that teachers give students to do at home.

There are different kinds of homework assignments. Children may:

- finish assignments started in school
- do assignments that practice or review something they learned in school (such as reading or math)
- do special projects, write papers, science experiments, create presentations
- study for a quiz or test

Teachers decide how much homework to give each night. Not all teachers give the same amount of homework. Older children usually have more homework than younger children. Here are some things you can do to help your children with their homework:

Homework Time: Children have many daily activities such as chores, appointments, playtime, after school programs, and homework. You can help your children schedule a special time for homework. It is best if homework is done at the same time every afternoon or evening, but not late in the evening. During homework time, you should turn off the television and video/computer games. Children need a quiet place to do their homework.

Looking at Homework: You can look at the homework to see if it is complete. Have your child explain their homework to you. Sometimes children see mistakes when they explain their homework.

Problems with Homework: Sometimes children cannot finish their homework because they don’t understand it. Parents should never do homework for their children. Parents should notify the teacher when children do not understand the homework.

Many parents feel that they cannot help their children with homework. Sometimes parents don’t understand much English or don’t understand the subject. If parents cannot help their child understand how to work a homework problem, they should write a note or call the child’s teacher. Parents can tell the teacher their child had a problem finishing the assignment. Sometimes children can get extra help with their homework assignments at school either before school, after school, or during recess.

Sometimes children don’t want to do their homework. They may find time to watch TV or play, but they never have time to do their homework. Often teachers will call or write a note to parents if a child is not doing homework. Teachers and parents must decide what will happen to children who don’t do their homework. Children should exhibit the character quality of responsibility. Getting homework completed is demonstrating responsibility.

HELPFUL HINT

Coppell ISD’s homework policy may be found in the Student Handbook at www.coppellisd.com/studenthandbook.

The Public Library: For some homework assignments children may need materials from the Public Library. All library materials can be used in the library. If your child wants to take materials home or use the library computers, you must have a library card. You can get a Public library card at the library.

Reading and Talking Together: Children who read at home do better in school. It is a good idea to have family reading time in your home. During reading time you can read to your children or your children can read to you. Or everyone can read by themselves during reading time. It is important for your children to see you read in English or in your native language.

If reading is difficult for you, then tell stories to your children. You can tell stories about your family when you were young and about when your children were babies. Your children can also tell stories. You can tell stories in English or your native language.

Family Learning Activities: Many schools and community organizations offer family learning programs in the evening and on weekends. Parents and children attend these family activities together. Your family can learn about subjects such as math, science, reading, and computers. You will usually receive materials to take home for more learning. City public libraries and the YMCA can be a good resource for families.

7. WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP MY CHILDREN PLAN FOR THEIR LIVES AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

Parents should find out about the school staff who can help with their children's future plans. The high school guidance counselor can help families make decisions about what students do after high school. When your child starts high school, begin to talk about future plans. It is best to make decisions before the last year of high school. If children decide too late to go to college, they may not have all the courses they need. Students have to take certain courses in high school to prepare for college. Students also have to take tests in high school to apply for college.



IX. ADULT EDUCATION



1. WHERE CAN I GO TO LEARN ENGLISH OR TAKE OTHER CLASSES?

There are many learning opportunities for adults. Many classes are free, but some charge tuition. Classes are offered in the daytime and the evening. Classes for adults are held at community colleges, libraries, and community centers.

Some adult education classes are:

English as a Second Language (ESL) – for basic English language skills.

General Educational Development (GED) and Basic Skills – for basic reading and math skills, and to prepare for the GED (high school completion) test.

There are also academic programs at colleges and universities. Academic programs prepare adults for college study and charge tuition.

A resource for Adult Education is North Lake College located at 101 South Royal Lane, Coppell, TX 75019. Phone: 972-860-4400.

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Dr. Edwin Silverman	Illinois Department of Human Services/Bureau of Refugee and Immigrant Services
Beth Robinson	Illinois State Board of Education
Sue Barauski	Director, Adult Learning Resource Center
Laura Bercovitz	Manager, Adult Learning Resource Center
Greg Krisco	Educational Consultant, Adult Learning Resource Center
Catherine Porter	Educational Consultant, Adult Learning Resource Center

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200 South Denton Tap Road | Coppell, Texas 75019 | 214.496.6000